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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS, U.S. DEFENSE
POLICY

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage August 28 on the Ma Ying-jeou administration's decision to allow the Dalai Lama's visit to Taiwan from August 30 to September 4, on the reconstruction plans in the areas hit by Typhoon Morakot, and on the H1N1 epidemic in Taiwan. In terms of editorials and commentaries, all the editorials of the major Chinese-language and English-language newspapers commented on the Ma administration's decision to allow Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama to visit Taiwan. Pro-independence newspapers, including the "Liberty Times" and the "Taiwan News," in addition to welcoming the Dalai Lama's visit, criticized the Ma administration's previous policies and comments about the Tibetan issue. On the other hand, pro-unification and KMT-leaning newspapers, including the "United Daily News" and the "China Times," expressed their worries that the Dalai Lama's Taiwan visit might have a negative impact on cross-strait relations which only started warming in 2008 after more than eight years' stagnation. Regarding a deal that the United States reached with Columbia recently on military bases, a column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" said the deal showed the United States' old imperial thinking. The thinking is a root cause of the anti-American sentiment in Latin America, said the column. End summary.

¶2. Cross-Strait Relations

A) "If the Dalai Lama Is Welcomed to Visit, He Should Be Allowed to Move Around Freely in Taiwan"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 700,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... Due to the pressure coming from the victims [of Typhoon Morakot], President Ma Ying-jeou had no choice but to allow the Dalai Lama to come to Taiwan. At the same time, however, [the Ma administration's defining the Dalai Lama's visit as humanitarian and religious in nature] is equivalent to restricting the nature of [the Dalai Lama's] activities. If it was not China that clandestinely gave the instructions (one should not forget that central and southern Taiwan is currently the main priority of China's united front) [to restrict the Dalai Lama's activities in Taiwan], it would be President Ma, who had censored himself because he is so scared of China. Both attitudes are scary. When the United States military came to Taiwan to aid after the August 8 flooding, President Ma had to check whether China nodded its head or not. These [practices] were all because [President Ma] is haunted by a sense of inferiority when facing the suzerain [China]. ..."

B) "Ma Ying-jeou Did the Right Thing This Time"

Columnist Antonio Chiang wrote in his column in the mass-circulation "Apple Daily" [circulation: 520,000] (8/28):

"... How China deals with the Tibetan and Xinjiang issues is an important matter for China's relations with Western countries. How [Taiwan President] Ma Ying-jeou deals with the issue of the Dalai

Lama is related to how Taiwan defines cross-Strait relations as well as how Taiwan preserves democratic values, human rights and freedom. After declining foreign aid [following Typhoon Morakot], Ma Ying-jeou finally did the thing right this time."

C) "The Time of the Dalai Lama's Taiwan Visit Is Not Suitable"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... The thinking of the Green [pro-independence forces in Taiwan] always regarded the Dalai Lama as a political bargaining chip. [Former Taiwan Presidents] Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian invited the Dalai Lama during their presidencies [was a] manipulation [aimed at] 'making the two T's [Tibet and Taiwan] converge.' It turned out that the relations between the two T's [Tibet and Taiwan] and Beijing were even more strained. Now, when there is a disaster [like that caused by Typhoon Morakot in Taiwan], the DPP inviting the Dalai Lama to visit Taiwan is a [dangerous] political maneuver. ... The DPP forced Taiwan, which has been in great trouble due to the flood and the H1N1 epidemic, to be [dragged] into a political whirlpool with an unpredictable [outcome.] Is the DPP bringing a blessing to Taiwan or bringing trouble to Taiwan? ..."

D) "Cherishing Cross-Strait Relations and Praying for Victims - Views On the Dalai Lama's Taiwan Visit"

The KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... Mainland [China]'s overwhelm goodwill [to Taiwan following Typhoon Morakot] got the Dalai Lama's Taiwan visit in return. The shock that Beijing [must feel] can be imagined. However, the POLICY

political atmosphere and the environments across the Taiwan Strait are different after all. [Taiwan President] Ma Ying-jeou's nod [to the Dalai Lama's Taiwan visit] is [made out of a] consideration of preventing his already low approval rating from declining further. However, the development of a country cannot be [judged by] an individual's approval rate. From now on, the Ma administration must make more efforts, including in words and concrete conduct, to [restore] the mutual trust across the Taiwan Strait. ..."

E) "Stupid to the Extreme, [President Ma] Ruins His Own Policy"

The KMT-leaning, China-focused "Want Daily" [circulation: 10,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... President Ma Ying-jeou has agreed to let the Dalai Lama visit Taiwan and pray for victims. In addition to feeling surprised at the decision, the public is also concerned about the possible impact on cross-Strait relations. Although the Dalai Lama is the religious leader of Tibetan Buddhism, he is also the political leader of the Tibetan Government in Exile, whose capacity is special and sensitive. The likely political controversy incurred by the Dalai Lama's Taiwan visit is extremely obvious. The Ma administration's hasty [decision] allowing the Dalai Lama to visit Taiwan ... was an extremely unwise decision. The policy roadmap for reconciliation across the Taiwan Strait that President Ma personally [designed] is going to face many dangers and difficulties. The gain does not equal the loss. ..."

F) "A Clever Trick to Trap A Weakened Ma Ying-jeou"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... But the timing isn't right for Taiwan, this time around. Taiwan is trying what it can to improve relations with China. It is relying ever more heavily on the other side of the Taiwan Strait for getting out of its current economic downturn and the global financial crisis. ..."

"We wish the People's Republic of China won't retaliate against Taiwan, for President Ma had no alternative but to welcome the Dalai Lama. Beijing always reacts strongly, often irrationally, when the Dalai Lama meets a head of state or government in any world

capital."

G) "Dalai Lama's Taiwan Visit Is Most 'Suitable'"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (8/28):

"... The visit by the Tibetan spiritual leader and statesman will affect cross-Strait relations with the PRC only if the Taiwan government, the ruling Chinese Nationalist Party and its sycophants or the authoritarian Chinese Communist Party regime makes his visit a political issue. ...

"Ma's decision to allow the Dalai Lama to visit itself can be seen as an act of 'redemption' for the government's grave error in refusing international rescue assistance immediately after Typhoon Morakot struck Taiwan. ..."

13. United States' Defense Policy

"The United States' 'Forward Operating Locations' Are All Over the World"

The "International Lookout" column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] wrote (8/28):

"... Latin American countries' anti-American sentiment is soaring. The main reason is that the United States takes without giving things in return. [The United States] wants to use resources in Latin America but does not want to provide economic aid. For those countries which do not follow the path of the United States in foreign affairs, [the United States] suppresses them and creates chaos in those countries, which obviously is an interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. As a result, Latin American politicians who uphold the anti-American flag are prone to be elected. 'Turning left' has become a fashion [in Latin America] and Columbia is the only country left which is still loyal [to the United States].

"However, with the anti-American sentiment soaring, the United States tries even harder to expand its military connections. [United States President Barack] Obama is no exception in this conduct. Therefore, although leaders in Latin America reiterated their warnings to the United States regarding the dangerous results, the Obama administration does not care."

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